

**Small CSA Contents:**

- 1 bunch multi-color swiss chard
- 1 pint maple syrup
- 1 lb boneless pork chops
- 1 quarter peck Lodi apples (sauce or baking apple)
- Approx 1.5 lbs peaches
- 1 candy onion
- 2 cucumbers
- 1 bunch mustard greens
- 1 lb beans

**Large Add-Ons – small plus items below**

- 1 pint blueberries
- Approx 1.5 lb apricots
- 1 head broccoli
- 1 bunch beets with tops
- 1 bunch green onions
- 8 oz cream cheese\*

\*delivered last week\*

**Vegetarian and Vegan Subs –**

- 1 pint blueberries
- 1 bunch beets with tops

**Berkshire Pork from New Creation Farm**

This week we are very proud to feature pastured Berkshire pork from New Creations Farm in Chardon, OH. You may ask, what's the big deal?

The taste is the big deal. I'm sure you'll notice immediately. This pork is from a Heritage breed of hogs known as Berkshires. A majority of your hogs on the market – the pink ones and the black and white ones – are either Hampshires, Yorkshires, or "market crosses", a Heinz 57 mix of generic hogs.

The traditional commercial hogs above are prized for their fast growth, long loins (more pork chops), and lean-ness. The general American clientele prefers to pay for meat, not fat, so a lean hog is preferred for commercial production.

Berkshires are slightly different. They are a heritage breed, which means that they are an older breed not traditionally raised anymore for meat. They are much fattier and are known for their dark skin, dark meat, and intramuscular marbling – which means flavor.

The Berkshire is perfect for our application as well because they have a very docile temperament and are good foragers. At New Creations Farm, they run through the woods digging up acorns, berries, and scraping up last year's vegetable garden. Their diet has then been supplemented with apples, molasses, non-gmo feeder grains (corn, oats, wheat, etc), and minerals.

Getting you this pork this week stated back around New Years when Scott from New Creations and I started planning production. Coming into this summer, I focused a lot of my energy on locking in an adequate supply of produce (then Mother Nature kicked me to the curb) and hedging my risk on a price increase on poultry. I knew grain prices were going to skyrocket, and that was mostly going to affect the cost of my chickens, which are very slim margins and already nearly triple the going market price. We successfully hedged that price increase by ordering early, paying early, buying in bulk, and sourcing different feed components separately and mixing them ourselves.

I never thought pork would be an issue for me. For the last couple years, pork just shows up on my doorsteps as farmers call asking if I can take a hog here and 10 there, etc. When we started planning this pork production, our biggest problem wasn't finding a good price on grains. Instead, it was finding available "feeder pigs." Feeder pigs are piglets that you buy from a breeder to raise out to market weight.

Last year, traditional commercial feeder hogs were about \$25 to \$35 for a 20 lb feeder pig. This year, those same hogs are going for about \$100. The Berkshire has been traditionally about double the price of those traditional hogs.

Getting the feeder hogs took months. We had to find a good breeder with a registered breeding line and available piglets. We found that breeder in Fort Wayne, IN. We then had to pay a trucker to bring the hogs back to Ohio. Once they were here, Scott managed these hogs for months until they were a market weight of about 320 lbs, which was just last week.

For anyone trying to do the math in their heads, the hogs cost about \$0.80 per lb live weight to feed. The yield from a 320 lb hog is about 240 lbs hanging. Once you cut the bones out, you get about 200 lbs of meat. Not all cuts sell for a good price (such as lard, pork shoulder, etc. Processing costs \$0.62 per lb hanging weight plus additional fees for curing, smoking, sausage making, and kill (\$60 right there). Then you have to figure in the cost of transportation to the butcher, from the butcher, distribution, and a profit for the farmer and me.

In short, pasture raised pork (like pastured chicken and beef) is an extremely low margin product. The taste difference, environmental benefits, and health benefits of such a natural product though hopefully justify the premium that New Creations and Fresh Fork have to charge.

**Peach Custard**

This recipe was shared by a Fresh Fork customer and she encourages you to use fresh peaches, as opposed to the canned ones called for in the recipe. This recipe is originally from Southern Heritage Cookbook.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 can (29 oz) peaches, chopped
- 4 eggs, separated
- 1.5 cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 4 cups milk, scalded
- 0.5 teaspoon vanilla

Place peaches evenly in bottom of a lightly greased 2 quart casserole, set aside.

Combine egg yolks, 1 cup sugar, and cornstarch in a large heavy saucepan; beat well. Gradually add milk, stirring constantly. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly with a metal spoon, until mixture begins to thicken and coat the spoon. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Pour custard mixture over peaches and set aside.

Beat egg whites (at room temp) until foamy. Gradually add the remaining sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating until peaks form. Add vanilla; beat well. Spread meringue over custard sealing to edge of casserole. Bake at 400 degrees for 5 mins or until meringue is lightly browned. Spoon into individual serving bowls and serve immediately.

**Apple Chutney**

There are countless recipes for apple chutney. This one below is from Epicurious and is a good summer compliment to pork or even as just an appetizer with goat cheese and crostinis (as the recipe suggests).

**Ingredients:**

- 1 c packed brown sugar
- 0.75 c rice vinegar or white vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1.5 tsp ginger
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 stick cinnamon
- 1.5 lb apples, peeled, cored, chopped
- 1 cup raisins, golden preferred
- 1 cup diced tomatoes, plum preferred
- 1 tablespoon fresh mint

Stir sugar and vinegar in large saucepan over medium heat until sugar dissolves. Add next 4 ingredients; simmer until reduced to 0.5 cups, about 8 minutes. Mix in apples and raisins. Increase heat and boil until apples are tender, stir frequently (about 10 min). Cool. Mix in tomatoes and mint.

This recipe can be halved if you just want it as a dressing for the pork. Also, if you don't like sweet, try cutting the sugar in half.